

Senate Bill 184: An Act Extending Through November 8, 2022, Several Changes Regarding Election Administration As A Result Of Covid-19 And Concerning Eligibility To Vote By Absentee Ballot.

House Bill 562: An Act Revising Certain Absentee Voting Eligibility Statutes.

To the **Government Administration and Elections Committee:**

I am Rose Reyes. I live in Windham, Connecticut and I am a Bilingual Educator in the public school system. I urge the committee to pass both Senate Bill 184 and House Bill 5262 that will extend absentee ballot access and expand eligibility.

More than 650,000 Connecticut voters voted by absentee ballot in the 2020 CT General Election—which means they voted early and on their own schedules. This led to a record breaking 80% voter turnout.

These bills are extremely important to me because I have been keeping up with the readings about COVID 19 and we may have a new variant and/or a serious uptick in cases and the consequences of long term COVID 19 will make it frightening and/or difficult to travel to polling places and may create unpredictable work schedules for essential workers which may cost them voting time, as well.

In addition, in my district we have many caregivers of the disabled and children. Also, similar to rural areas, we do not have a comprehensive public transportation system to deliver constituents to the polling sites in a timely manner as they are obliged to care for family members or as care workers obliged to keep a schedule for their clients.

Voters should be able to vote this year by absentee ballot as COVID19 persists in the varied mutations and long COVID19 symptoms are debilitating. Please continue the COVID19 safety measures of 2020 and 2021 for 2022 and allow for those who are/have been vulnerable to the exposure of COVID19 to vote by absentee ballot and expand the eligibility definitions so that we protect the freedom to vote for all who qualify.

Thank you,
Rose Reyes
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